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REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 14-23 are pending in this Application. Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8, 10, 12, 14-17, and 22 to define the claimed invention more particularly.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant has amended the claims to address the Examiner's concerns.

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, and 14-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morley et al. (WO 99/59335) in view of Takamori (U.S. Pat. No. 5,287,186) and further in view of Duso et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,892,915).

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention (e.g., as defined by exemplary claim 1) is directed to a digital content reproducing system.

The digital content reproducing system includes a movie company terminal which stores and manages a digital content of movies, a content delivery terminal in communication with the movie company terminal via a network, and a projecting system which is connected to the content delivery terminal via the network, receives the digital content from the content delivery terminal via the network, and reproduces the digital content to show a movie. The projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device to the backup reproducing device. The backup reproducing device starts processing the decoded digital content in synchronization with the predetermined signal when the reproducing device stops sending the predetermined signal.

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In a conventional a conventional reproducing system used in a movie theater, as described in the Background of the present Application, movie images recorded or shot on a film are generally projected or shown on a screen. Also, a movie sound is reproduced through a loudspeaker by outputting audio data stored in, for example, a CD-ROM (e.g., see Application at page 1, lines 10-13).

This process can cause numerous defects and noises to occur by repetition of copying in an analog method and reproducing operations, since the content including images recorded on the films are degraded each time when the film or an original film is repeatedly copied (e.g., see Application at page 1, lines 22-25).

The claimed invention, however, provides a digital content reproducing system, wherein the projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit, while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal indicating progress of reproducing of the reproducing device to the backup reproducing device (e.g., see Application at page 3, lines 1-11).

This feature is important because with this arrangement, the reliability of all aspects of the content production, delivery, and presentation can be increased. The present invention also makes it easier to deal with the content and does not subject the content to the risk of degradation and/or damage (e.g., see Application at page 2, lines 3-8).

II. 35 U.S.C. 112, FIRST PARAGRAPH REJECTIONS

In rejecting claims 7 and 8, the Examiner alleges that the claim is indefinite for failing to particularly point out the invention.

Applicant amended claim 7 to recite, *"a decrypting module which is connected to the mass memory unit and decrypts the video data received from the mass memory unit; the video decoder which receives the video signals from the first decrypting module and decodes them; and a video signal output device which receives the decoded video signals from the video decoder and outputs them to the audio-visual input switching device, and the audio data processing section comprising: the decrypting module which decrypts the audio data received from the mass memory unit,"* to define the claimed invention more particularly.

The amended claim reflects the embodiment of the invention shown in Fig. 5 and does not recite "the second decrypting module".

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Applicant also amended claim 8 to recite, "*The digital content reproducing system of claim 1 further comprising: a video signal output device which supplies decoded video signals to a projecting device other than through a audio-visual input switching device; and an audio signal output device which supplies decoded audio signals to an audio processor other than through an audio-visual input switching device.*" to define the claimed invention more particularly.

The amended claim reflects the embodiment of the invention shown exemplarily in Fig. 10 and does not recite "an audio-visual input switching device".

Therefore, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw these rejections.

III. THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

In rejecting claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12, and 14-23, the Examiner alleges that one of ordinary skill in the art would have combined Takamori with Duso et al. and Morley et al. to render obvious the claimed invention. Applicant respectfully submits, however, that the references would not have been combined as alleged by the Examiner and that, even if combined, the alleged combination of references would not teach or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention.

In order to allegedly combine Takamori with Morley et al., the Examiner applies a circular reasoning argument and states that, "*it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made to modify the decoder of Morley et al. to include a back-up system and a video switcher for switching between the decoder and the back-up system upon failure of the decoder, such as that taught by Takamori in order to provide a second unit for backup purpose*" (emphasis added) (see Office Action at page 5, line 19 – page 6 line 2).

Thus, instead of pointing out to the suggestion, motivation, expectation, or reasoning that Takamori can be combined with Morley et al., the Examiner states that a back-up system can be used for backup purpose.

Indeed, the back-up switcher of Takamori has a different application and purpose, is not in the same environment, and does not fit in the same input function as reproduction device of Morley et al.

Furthermore, the alleged combination of Morley et al., Takamori, and Duso et al. does

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not teach or suggest, *"wherein the projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit, while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal,"* (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22. This feature is important because by applying a backup reproducing device that encodes digital content, the reliability of all aspects of the content production, delivery, and presentation can be increased.

In rejecting independent claims 1, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22, the Examiner concedes that *"Morley et al. does not specifically disclose a backup reproducing device that decodes the digital content supplied from a mass memory unit,"* (e.g. see Office Action at page 5, lines 7-8). The Examiner relies on Takamori for teaching the backup producing device.

Takamori teaches a switcher apparatus for selectively supplying video signals comprising a main control panel 11, a video processor unit 13, a digital audio processor unit 15 and a video processor modification set 17, as well as a reserve block 3 that includes a reserve control panel 31, a video processor unit 33, a digital audio processor unit 35 and a video processor modification set 37 (col. 2, lines 7-25; Fig. 1). The reserve block 3 merely processes video and audio signals and does not include an audio decoder and a video decoder, as well as a mass memory unit. Indeed, the Examiner concedes that *"Takamori discloses a video switcher apparatus with a back-up system"* (emphasis added by Applicant) (e.g., see Office Action at page 5, lines 12-13).

Thus, instead of teaching or suggesting, *"wherein the projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit, while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal,"* (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22, Takamori teaches a reserve block that merely processes video and audio signals and does not include an audio decoder and a video decoder that decode the digital content, as claimed in the present invention. Therefore, Takamori lacks the teachings of an audio decoder and a video decoder within the backup reproducing device.

Furthermore, Duso et al. merely teach a heartbeat signal that conveys between a master controller server and a slave server (col. 50, lines 1-13). Duso et al. are silent about *"wherein the projecting system includes a reproducing device, and a backup reproducing*

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device having an audio decoder and a video decoder that decodes digital content supplied from a mass memory unit, while the reproducing device periodically sends a first predetermined signal,” (emphasis added by Applicant) as recited in claim 1, and similarly recited in claims 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 22. Indeed, the Examiner does not even allege that Duso et al. teach or suggest this feature. The Examiner merely relies on Duso et al. for teaching sending periodic signals.

Thus, Duso et al. and Takamori fail to make up the deficiencies of Morley et al.

Furthermore, in rejecting claim 3, the Examiner alleges that “*the combination of Morley et al., Takamori, and Duso et al. teaches the digital content reproducing system of claim 2*” (e.g., see Office Action at page 7, lines 20-21). The Examiner, however, fails to address claim 2 in the Office Action and does not show that the alleged prior art documents disclose each element within claim 2.

Moreover, in rejecting claims 4, 7, and 21, the Examiner alleges that “*the reproduction device and the backup reproducing device comprise the same elements*” (e.g., see Office Action at page 8, lines 6-7).

Indeed, as set forth above, Takamori teaches a reserve block that merely processes video and audio signals and lacks the teachings of an encryption/decryption module, an audio-visual separating module, a video decoder, a video signal output device, an audio decoder, and an audio signal output device as recited in claims 4 and 7. Also, claim 21 depends upon independent claim 1, not claim 3, as erroneously stated by the Examiner.

Additionally, in rejecting claim 6, 10, 19, and 20, the Examiner alleges that “*the combination of Morley et al., Takamori, and Duso et al. teaches the digital content reproducing system of claims 5 and 9*” (e.g., see Office Action at page 9, lines 6-7). The Examiner, however, fails to address claims 5 and 9 in the Office Action and does not show that the alleged prior art documents disclose each element within claims 5 and 9. Indeed, claims 19 and 20 depend upon independent claim 18, not claim 9, as erroneously stated by the Examiner. In fact, the Examiner also fails to address claim 18 in the Office Action.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this rejection since the alleged prior art references (either alone or in combination) fail to teach or suggest each element and feature of Applicant’s claimed invention.

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IV. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-12 and 14-23, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

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